



Case N-32720A/USN

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR U.S. PATENT APPLICATIONS

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name, and

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

CLOSURE DEVICE FOR FLEXIBLE POUCHES

the specification of which was filed on September 26, 2003 as U.S. Application No. **10/672,318.**

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims.

I acknowledge my duty to disclose all information which is known by me to be material to the patentability of this application as defined in 37 C.F.R. §1.56.

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d) or §365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and under 35 U.S.C. §365(a) of any PCT international application(s) designating at least one country other than the United States listed below and have also listed below any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate or any PCT international application(s) designating at least one country other than the United States for the same subject matter and having a filing date before that of the application the priority of which is claimed for that subject matter:

None

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 USC §119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

Application No.

Filing Date

60/417,917

October 11, 2002

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and under 35 U.S.C. §365(c) of any PCT international application(s) designating the United States listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this

application is not disclosed in said prior application(s) in the manner required by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information known by me to be material to patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. §1.56 which became available between the filing date(s) of the prior application(s) and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

None

I hereby appoint the attorneys and agents associated with Customer No. 001095, respectively and individually, as my attorneys and agents, with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

Please address all communications to the address associated with Customer No. 001095, which is currently Thomas Hoxie, Novartis, Corporate Intellectual Property, One Health Plaza, Building 430, East Hanover, NJ 07936-1080.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. §1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

SOLE INVENTOR:

Full name : Robert G. RANI

Signature : Robert G. Rani

Date : 10/21/03
(MM/DD/YY)

Citizenship : United States of America

Residence : Vadnais Heights, Minnesota

P.O. Address : 172 Red Oaks Drive
Vadnais Heights, Minnesota 55127

IMPORTANT: Before this declaration is signed, the patent application (the specification, the claims and this declaration) must be read and understood by each person signing it, and no changes may be made in the application after this declaration has been signed.